

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 TEL AV 04328 01 OF 02 301628Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 NEAE-00 SSO-00 INRE-00
NSCE-00 USIE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 SSM-03 ACDA-12
/088 W

-----042584 301703Z /47

O R 301449Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2299
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
USMISSION SINAI
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 TEL AVIV 4328

E.O.11652: N/A
TAGS: PEPR, PGOV, PINT, IS, XF
SUBJ: EIGHT-HOUR KNESSET FOREIGN POLICY DEBATE CONCLUDES WITH
VOTE SUPPORTING GOVERNMENT

REF: TEL AVIV 4276

1. SUMMARY: PRIME MINISTER BEGIN ANSWERED ALIGNMENT
CRITICISM IN YESTERDAY'S KNESSET FOREIGN POLICY DEBATE
BY MOCKING THE OPPOSITION'S IMPATIENCE AND ASSERTING
THAT WHAT PREVENTS PEACE IS THE ARABS' CALL FOR TOTAL
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 TEL AV 04328 01 OF 02 301628Z

WITHDRAWAL AND CREATION OF A PALESTINIAN STATE. AMONG
BEGIN'S CRITICS WERE TWO DMC MKS WHO JOINED OPPOSI-
TION POLITICIANS IN HAMMERING AWAY AT SETTLEMENT ACTIVITY
AND BEGIN'S INTERPRETATION OF 242. ALTHOUGH THE COALI-
TION EASILY WON THE KNESSET VOTE (IT WAS NOT A MOTION
OF NON-CONFIDENCE) THE ABSTENTION OF SIX DMC MKS REFLECTS
A WEAKENING IN WHAT HAD BEEN MORE SOLID COALITION SUPPORT

IN PREVIOUS FOREIGN POLICY DEBATES. END SUMMARY

2. IN PRIME MINISTER BEGIN'S REBUTTAL, WHICH CONCLUDED YESTERDAY'S EIGHT-HOUR KNESSET DEBATE ON THE GOVERNMENT'S HANDLING OF PEACE NEGOTIATIONS, HE SHARPLY JABBED AT OPPOSITION LEADER PERES AND THE ALIGNMENT FOR INSISTING ON THEIR APPROACH TO PEACE. HE REMINDED THE HOUSE THAT THE ALIGNMENT'S POSITION ON TERRITORIAL COMPROMISE HAD BEEN TRIED FOR MANY YEARS AND "NEITHER BROUGHT US PEACE NOR PREVENTED WAR." BEGIN PROFESSED NOT TO UNDERSTAND HOW THE ALIGNMENT SPOKESMEN COULD EXPRESS IMPATIENCE WITH THE PEACE OF NEGOTIATIONS WHEN THEY HAD YEARS TO IMPLEMENT THEIR IDEAS. BRITISH ENTRY INTO THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY HAD TAKEN NINE YEARS, WHEREAS HIS GOVERNMENT HAS HAD ONLY THREE DAYS OF ACTUAL NEGOTIATIONS: "A DAY AND A HALF IN JERUSALEM AND TWO DAYS AND AN EVENING IN CAIRO."

3. TO IMPLIED ASPERSIONS CONCERNING HIS DESIRE FOR PEACE, BEGIN ASKED RHETORICALLY, "WHY SHOULD WE HAVE OPENED OURSELVES TO THE ACCUSATION THAT WE DID NOT DEMAND WHAT YOU (THE ALIGNMENT) WOULD HAVE DEMANDED IN NORTHERN SINAI OR FROM SHARM EL SHEIK TO EILAT, HAD WE NOT DESIRED PEACE WITH ALL OUR HEARTS?" HE SAID THE ONE REASON PEACE AGREEMENTS HAVE NOT BEEN SIGNED IS THAT ALL ARAB LEADERS, MODERATE AND RADICAL ALIKE, DEMAND WITH-

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 TEL AV 04328 01 OF 02 301628Z

DRAWAL TO THE 1967 LINES AND ESTABLISHMENT OF A PALESTINIAN STATE. "IS ANY ONE OF YOU READY FOR PEACE ON THIS BASIS?"

4. NOTEWORTHY AMONG THE MANY SPEECHES WERE ABBA EBAN'S CASTIGATION OF BEGIN'S INTERPRETATION OF 242 AS "IN-ADMISSIBLE." AND HAIM BAR LEV'S CALL FOR A NEW PEACE POLICY OR A NEW GOVERNMENT. (THE LATTER POINT WAS NOT RAISED BY PERES IN THIS SPEECH.) WHILE ALIGNMENT ATTACKS WERE, OF COURSE, PREDICTABLE, THE ANTI-GOVERNMENT SPEECHES OF TWO DMC DOVES, MORDECHAI WIRSHUBSKI AND DAVID GOLOMB, AROUSED PARTICULAR INTEREST. BOTH HEATEDLY CRITICIZED BEGIN'S INTERPRETATION OF 242 AND THE CONTINUATION OF SETTLEMENT ACTIVITY IN THE TERRITORIES, WHICH THEY SEE AS ADVERSELY AFFECTING PEACE TALKS. HOWEVER, THE DMC'S LEADING DOVE, AMNON RUBENSTEIN, BOTH SUPPORTED AND CRITICIZED THE GOVERNMENT. HE DECLARED BEGIN'S PEACE PLAN IS STILL A FAIR BASIS FOR NEGOTIATIONS BUT ASKED WHY THE GOVERNMENT FOUND IT NECESSARY BY ITS SETTLEMENT POLICY TO ADD TO SADAT'S DIFFICULTIES IN THE ARAB WORLD. IN FACT, SEVERAL SPEAKERS WHO OTHERWISE SUPPORTED THE GOVERNMENT ATTACKED ITS CONFUSED AND CONFUSING SETTLEMENT ACTIVITY. FOREIGN MINISTER DAYAN, WHO IN-

VARIABLY ADDS HIS REBUTTAL TO FOREIGN POLICY DEBATES

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 TEL AV 04328 02 OF 02 301638Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 NEAE-00 SSO-00 INRE-00
NSCE-00 USIE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 SSM-03 ACDA-12
/088 W

-----042851 301702Z /47

O R 301449Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2300
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
USMISSION SINAI
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 2 OF 2 TEL AVIV 4328

EVEN WHEN THE GOVERNMENT'S CASE IS MADE BY THE PRIME
MINISTER, RESPONDED TO PERES' ASSERTION THAT 242 IS
"THE HEART OF THE PROBLEM." BY SAYING HE DID NOT BELIEVE
ISRAEL'S ACCEPTANCE OF 242'S APPLICABILITY TO THE WEST
BANK WOULD CHANGE ANYTHING WITH EGYPT (SEE SEPTTEL).

5. AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE DEBATE AND AFTER OPPOSI-
TION RESOLUTIONS WERE EASILY DEFEATED, THE COALITION'S
RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE GOVERNMENT'S PEACE EFFORTS
WON HANDILY 64 TO 32 WITH NINE ABSTENTIONS. THE YEA
AND NAY VOTES CAN STRICTLY ALONG PARTY LINES. HOWEVER,
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 TEL AV 04328 02 OF 02 301638Z

THE ABSTAINERS INCLUDED SEVEN FROM THE DMC, GEULA COHEN (HERUT) AND GIDEON HAUSNER (ILP). THE DMC ABSTENTIONS WERE IN KEEPING WITH THE PARTY'S COALITION AGREEMENT WHICH PERMITS A FREE VOTE ON CERTAIN FOREIGN POLICY QUESTIONS (EXCLUDING NO-CONFIDENCE RESOLUTIONS).

6. COMMENT: AS USUAL, BEGIN WAS HARDER-HITTING AND MORE ANIMATED IN REBUTTAL THAN IN HIS OPENING DELIVERY. THE STYLE OF HIS INITIAL SPEECH WAS TIRED; SOME OBSERVERS TERMED IT ONE OF HIS MOST LISTLESS PERFORMANCES. HE SEEMED PARTICULARLY DEFENSELESS IN THE FACE OF INTERJECTIONS FROM THE FLOOR (REFTTEL) -- AN UNCHARACTERISTIC ATTITUDE FOR BEGIN. IN CONTRAST, PERES WAS IN PARTICULARLY GOOD FORM, DRIVING HOME HIS TELLING ATTACKS WITH ENTHUSIASM. LAST NIGHT DEFENSE MINISTER WEIZMAN OBSERVED TO THE AMBASSADOR, "PERES DID EXTREMELY WELL -- AND I TOLD HIM SO."

7. THE GOVERNMENT'S APPARENT COMFORTABLE MARGIN OF VICTORY IS SOMEWHAT MISLEADING. EROSION OF BEGIN'S SOLID COALITION SUPPORT OF A FEW MONTHS AGO HAS SET IN. THE ABSTENTION OF HALF THE DMC MKS PRESENT IS A CLEAR WARNING OF THAT PARTY'S RESTLESSNESS WITH BEGIN'S FOREIGN POLICY. TWO NRP DOVES, AVRAHAM MELAMED AND DAVID GLASS, REGISTERED THEIR DISSENT BY VOTING FOR THE ALIGNMENT RESOLUTION (BEATEN BY 75 TO 33), ALTHOUGH THEY FELL-IN WITH COALITION DISCIPLINE ON THE GOVERNMENT RESOLUTION. WHILE FISSURES IN THE COALITION THUS SEEM TO BE SPREADING, FAINT EVIDENCE OF NEW SPIRIT AMONG THE OPPOSITION CAME THROUGH IN YESTERDAY'S DEBATE. LEWIS

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MEETING PROCEEDINGS, CENTRAL LEGISLATURE, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 30 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978TELAV04328
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780138-0532
Format: TEL
From: TEL AVIV
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t1978036/aaaaaewt.tel
Line Count: 202
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 45e7a1c5-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 TEL AVIV 4276
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3305774
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: EIGHT-HOUR KNESSET FOREIGN POLICY DEBATE CONCLUDES WITH VOTE SUPPORTING GOVERNMENT
TAGS: PEPR, PGOV, PINT, IS, XF, (BEGIN, MENAHEM)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/45e7a1c5-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014